UNITED NATIONS

ST

Secretariat

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ADMINISTRATIVE INSTRUCTION

RECRUITMENT PROCEDURES FOR PROFESSIONAL STAFF*

Pursuant to staff regulation 4.1 and section 4.2 of Secretary-General's bulletin ST/SGB/1997/1, the Under-Secretary-General for Management promulgates the following to implement the provisions of General Assembly resolution 51/226 of 3 April 1997 dealing with recruitment and to clarify a number of related issues:

Section 1

Scope

The present instruction shall apply to recruitment of staff in situations where:

(a) The recruitment is for a post financed by the regular budget or for an extrabudgetary post authorized for one year or longer; and

(b) The post is in the Professional category or above; and

(c) The resulting appointment will be for a probationary period or a fixed-term under the 100 series of the Staff Rules.

Section 2

General principles

2.1 Pursuant to article 101, paragraph 3, of the Charter of the United Nations and staff regulation 4.2, the paramount consideration in the recruitment of all staff shall be the necessity of securing the highest standards of efficiency, competence and integrity.

* Personnel Manual index No. 4125.

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2.2 Subject to the above provision, recruitment for posts in the Professional category and above shall respect the requirements of equitable geographical distribution, as set out in section 5 of the present instruction, and the need to provide equal opportunity for men and women to participate in any capacity and under conditions of equality in the work of the Secretariat, by implementing the special measures for the achievement of gender equality set out in administrative instruction ST/AI/412 of 5 January 1996 or any subsequent administrative issuance on the same subject.

Section 3

Vacancies

3.1 A "vacant" post is defined as a post approved for one year or longer, which is not blocked for an incumbent, as would be the case for mission replacement, leave without pay, secondment, short-term assignment or temporary loan. In case of lateral transfer within the department or office, the vacant post for which a vacancy announcement is required under section 3.3 shall be the post that is no longer encumbered after such transfer.

3.2 Heads of department or office shall inform the Office of Human Resources Management of every foreseen vacancy six months before the post becomes vacant, and of all other vacancies as soon as they occur.

3.3 A vacancy announcement shall be issued for all vacant posts at the P-3 level and above. The only exceptions shall be for appointments at the under-secretary-general and assistant secretary-general levels, appointments as special envoys of the Secretary-General at all levels and appointments to posts in the Executive Office of the Secretary-General.

3.4 A vacancy announcement may be issued for posts at the P-2 level to facilitate movement of staff on P-2 posts from one department or office to another.

Section 4

Recruitment at the P-1/2 and P-3 levels

4.1 Recruitment at the P-1 and P-2 levels shall be made exclusively through competitive recruitment examinations, and in accordance with the provisions of staff rule 104.15.

4.2 Appointments at the P-3 level shall normally be made through competitive examinations, as follows:

(a) An internal vacancy announcement shall be issued to ensure that all qualified candidates at the P-2 level have the opportunity to be considered for promotion, and that candidates at the P-3 level who have been appointed for one year or longer or for a probationary period in accordance with staff rule 104.14 or 104.15 have the opportunity to be considered for lateral transfer;

(b) If no suitable internal candidate is identified, candidates successful in a competitive recruitment examination at the P-3 level in the relevant occupational group shall be reviewed and selected as appropriate;

(c) An external vacancy announcement shall be circulated only when there is no suitably qualified candidate among those having successfully passed a P-3 examination.

4.3 On recruitment, new staff members having successfully passed a competitive recruitment examination shall receive a probationary appointment. They shall be considered for permanent appointment after having completed the period of probationary service, in accordance with staff rule 104.13 (a).

Section 5

Equitable geographical distribution

5.1 Recruitment for a Professional post leading to an appointment of one year or longer that is not limited to service with a particular mission, office, fund or programme shall be subject to the system of desirable ranges set out in General Assembly resolution 42/220 A of 21 December 1987, as reaffirmed by the Assembly in its resolution 51/226, except for language services posts and posts financed by the support account for peacekeeping operations.

5.2 The appointment of candidates recruited through a national competitive recruitment examination shall not be restricted to service with a particular mission, office, fund or programme. However, candidates recruited through a competitive language examination shall serve a minimum of five years on a language post before being eligible to apply for another Professional post in the Secretariat.

5.3 In recruiting staff at the Professional level for posts that are outside the scope of application of the desirable range system, due regard shall nevertheless be paid to the importance of recruiting the staff on as wide a geographical basis as possible.

5.4 Subject to the provisions of section 5.5, staff members whose appointment is limited to service with a particular mission, office, fund or programme and who have been recruited outside the desirable range system may only apply for posts subject to that system that have been the object of an external vacancy announcement.

5.5 Staff members who have served in peacekeeping and other field missions for a continuous period of at least 12 months and women staff members who meet the conditions set out in paragraph 7 of administrative instruction ST/AI/412 shall be eligible to apply for Professional posts that have been circulated internally, provided they hold a current appointment at the time they submit their application. Staff members found eligible to apply under this provision may be appointed to the advertised post provided they satisfy the applicable requirements of equitable geographical distribution and gender equality, and the established recruitment criteria, including university qualifications and professional experience.

Section 6

Limitations on temporary appointments of less than one year

6.1 No recruitment for a temporary appointment for a fixed-term of less than one year under the 100 series of the Staff Rules shall be made against regular posts or extrabudgetary posts authorized for one year or longer unless the Executive Officer or Chief of Administration at offices away from Headquarters certifies in writing that the appointment is required to meet a temporary need of less than one year's duration, such as replacement of staff on field mission assignment, secondment or special leave without pay, which cannot be met by temporary reassignment, preferably from within the department or office concerned.

6.2 Staff members recruited on temporary appointments for a fixed-term of less than one year under the 100 series of the Staff Rules in accordance with section 6.1, including mission replacement staff, shall receive a letter of appointment bearing a special condition specifying that their appointment is limited to meeting a temporary need, and is subject to termination, with appropriate notice, in the event the temporary need ceases to exist prior to the expiration date indicated in the letter of appointment.

6.3 Temporary staff members recruited in accordance with the provisions of this section may serve for a maximum period of 11 months only. However, the appointment of mission replacement staff may be renewed to cover a maximum period of three years without reference to the appointment and promotion bodies when such persons replace staff members on mission detail whose absence is subject to renewal of the mandate of the mission.

6.4 Temporary staff members placed against regular budget posts or extrabudgetary posts of one year or longer may not apply for, or be reappointed to, their current post within six months of the end of their current service.

Section 7

Limitations on recruitment of certain types of personnel

Interns, consultants, individual contractors and personnel provided to the Organization on a non-reimbursable basis, including gratis personnel, shall not be eligible to apply for, or be appointed to, any post in the Secretariat for a period of six months following the end of their service.

Section 8

Transitional measures

The limitations set out in section 6 shall not apply in the following cases:

(a) When the recruitment process was in progress and a staff member on an appointment of less than one year had been recommended on or before 3 April 1997

by the head of the department or office concerned, or, in the absence of such a recommendation, by a departmental panel under established procedures;

(b) Staff members who, on 3 April 1997, served on an appointment of less than one year against a post authorized under the support account for peacekeeping operations, or a post authorized for the International Tribunals for Yugoslavia and Rwanda, provided the department or office concerned has submitted to the Office of Human Resources Management a request for a vacancy announcement for the post, with all supporting documentation, on or before 15 December 1997.

Section 9

Final provisions

9.1 The present administrative instruction shall enter into force on 20 November 1997.

9.2 Personnel directive PD/1/1993 of 30 March 1993 on replacement of staff in the Professional and higher categories assigned to special missions, and information circular ST/IC/1997/12 of 5 February 1997, which informed staff of the interim decision on human resources management issues taken by the General Assembly on 18 December 1996, are hereby abolished.

(Signed) Joseph E. CONNOR
Under-Secretary-General
for Management